



October 13, 2014

Via email

felicia.marcus@waterboards.ca.gov thomas.howard@waterboards.ca.gov

Felicia Marcus, Chair

Thomas Howard, Executive Director State Water Resources Control Board 1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95812

RE: ACL Complaint R7-2014-0041, National Beef California, LP

Dear Ms. Marcus and Mr. Thomas:

We are in support of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region's request to the State Water Resource Board that the proposed civil liability penalty assessed by the Water Board be carried out. As a Community based organization in the Imperial Valley, we understand that the complaint against National Beef, a former slaughterhouse, resulted in an investigation and a complaint against the city of Brawley for chronic violations of its wastewater discharge permit and was also found in violation of an earlier cease and desist order. The complaint against the city identified National Beefs discharge as a significant factor in the city's violations.

The National Beef complaint alleged that the company violated federal pretreatment standards and requirements in the Clean Water Act which prohibit an industrial user from introducing into a publicly owned treatment facility any pollutants which cause "pass through" or "interference" with a city treatment plant. The slaughterhouse generated thousands of gallons per day of discharge to groundwater through unlined ponds, and million's of gallons per day of industrial waste water to the city's wastewater treatment facility. Effluent from the city plant is discharged into the New River, which is already severely polluted from sources in Mexico and Imperial County. The new river is a tributary to the Salton Sea. Both the New River and the Salton Sea are "Waters of the United States" and are listed as impaired waters under the clean water act. The discharger in this case, National Beef, began operation in 2006, and was found to have violated Federal pretreatment regulations pursuant to Section 307 of Clean Water Act (33 USC 1317).

OUR ROOTS MULTI-CULTURAL CENTER, INC.,

National Beef was a bad neighbor for many years. In addition to endangering the city's drinking water, it shut down its operation and left behind a huge debt for the state and city to clean up. Their shut down should not preclude them from penalties administered for their violation of the Clean Water Act.

Our organization encourages you to carry out, and enforce the civil penalties, which would send out a clear message to polluters that the citizens of this state will not tolerate this type of behavior.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John L. Hernandez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

John L. Hernandez
President, Our Roots Multi-Cultural Center